



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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ROW CROPS PERFORM WELL DESPITE DRY CONDITIONS

NASHVILLE, January 12, 2006 – Although Tennessee's 2005 growing season was one of the driest in recent years, early plantings and timely rains helped produce above normal yields, according to a recent survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office. The state's cotton farmers produced the largest number of bales on record, surpassing the previous mark set a year earlier. Corn yields, although well below the previous year's record, were 5 bushels above the 5-year average. Soybean yields were down from last year as well, but three bushels above normal. Burley tobacco acreage continued its rapid decline with farmers growing less than 20,000 acres for the first time since 1922. State Director Debra Kenerson noted that "Rainfall, brought on by the remnants of numerous hurricanes which crossed through the State, helped alleviate dry conditions and turned an average crop year into an above normal one."

COTTON PRODUCTION TOPS LAST YEAR'S RECORD

Tennessee's cotton production is estimated at a state record 1,120,000 bales, up 14 percent from the previous record set in 2004. Producers planted 640,000 acres, up 110,000 from 2004. The State's final yield averaged 847 pounds of lint per acre, down 53 pounds from the previous year's record yield of 900 pounds per acre. Growing conditions for the cotton crop in 2005 were generally favorable, but weather for cotton harvest was fantastic and translated into more lint and good quality. Nearly all the crop had been ginned by the end of December.

CORN PRODUCTION DOWN 10 PERCENT, SORGHUM UP 20 PERCENT

Corn for grain production is estimated at 77.4 million bushels, down 10 percent from 2004. The final yield, at 130 bushels per acre, was down 10 bushels from the record high of 140 bushels per acre set the previous season. Tennessee corn producers planted 650,000 acres during 2005, down 30,000 from a year earlier. Harvested area for grain was 595,000 acres and 50,000 acres for silage. Silage yield, at 19.0 tons per acre, was the same as 2004 with production totaling 950,000 tons. The majority of the corn crop was planted on schedule by mid-May. The rest of the season was characterized by mostly dry weather interrupted by the remnants of hurricanes that passed through the state. Harvest weather was ideal, allowing farmers to reach completion by mid-October. Grain sorghum production in 2005 is estimated at 1.84 million bushels, up 20 percent from 2004. Area harvested for grain, at 20,000 acres, was up 3,000 acres from 2004, while average yield, at 92 bushels per acre, was up 2 bushels from the same period.

SOYBEAN PRODUCTION DOWN 14 PERCENT

The State's final soybean yield is estimated at 38 bushels per acre, down 3 bushels from the previous year. Soybean production, at 41.8 million bushels, was down 14 percent from a year earlier, but 8 percent above the average for the previous five years. Producers planted 1,130,000 acres and harvested for beans 1,100,000 acres, down 80,000 acres from the previous year for both categories. Soybean planting began during the last week of April and continued at a rapid pace until completion near the middle of June, about 2 weeks ahead of normal. Development also followed this speedy pace and allowed harvest to be completed nearly 3 weeks ahead of the five-year average. Double-cropped soybean yields surprised many producers, as solid yields were reported in areas which received significant rainfall the beginning of September from Katrina.

LOWEST BURLEY PRODUCTION IN 77 YEARS

Burley tobacco growers expect to produce 34.0 million pounds, down 26 percent from 2004 and the lowest production since 1928. Yield per acre averaged 2,000 pounds, up 80 pounds from a year earlier. Growers harvested 17,000 acres, down 29 percent from the previous year. Despite disease problems and dry weather, development progressed at a near normal pace with the crop rated in mostly good condition throughout the season. By the first week of November, growers had stripped over half of the burley crop. Tennessee's dark fire-cured tobacco yields are estimated at 3,000 pounds, down 115 pounds from 2004. Dark air-cured yields are estimated at 2,600 pounds per acre, down 150 pounds from a year earlier.

(OVER)

HAY PRODUCTION FOURTH LARGEST ON RECORD

Hay production, at 4.37 million tons, was down 11 percent from the 2004 record crop, but still the fourth largest since records began in 1909. Hay acreage, at 1,885,000, was down 3 percent from a year earlier. Hay production, excluding alfalfa, at 4.26 million tons, was 10 percent lower than 2004. These hay producers harvested 1.85 million acres, 50,000 acres less than a year earlier with a final yield of 2.30 tons per acre, down 0.2 tons from the previous year. Total alfalfa production, at 112,000 tons, was down 16 percent from 2004. Alfalfa producers harvested 35,000 acres with a yield of 3.20 tons per acre, down 0.6 tons from last year. Hay harvest got off to a slow start due to cool, wet weather during late April and into early May. Drier conditions followed soon after and continued for the remainder of the season. A dry fall hampered growth of hay fields and prevented many farmers from obtaining their typical second and third cuttings. Growers seeded 5,000 acres of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures during 2005.

2006 WINTER WHEAT ACREAGE UP 25 PERCENT

Total wheat acreage for 2006 is forecast at 300,000 acres, up 60,000 acres from 2005. Winter wheat planting was underway by the last week of September with 5 percent of the crop seeded by October 2. By mid-month, 27 percent of the expected crop was sown, with farmers awaiting rains to help germination. Dry conditions continued and by month’s end, farmers had two-thirds of their acreage seeded with a little over a fourth emerged. Through November 27, virtually all of the winter wheat had been sown with 85 percent emerged and poor-to-fair stands being reported.

CROP ESIMATES: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, FINAL 2005, WITH COMPARISONS

Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
TENNESSEE							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	11,000	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	615	595	140	130	86,100	77,350
Corn for silage	ton	55	50	19	19	1,045	950
Cotton ¹	lb.	525	635	900	847	984	1,120
Cottonseed	ton	---	---	---	---	336	391
Hay, All	ton	1,935	1,885	2.52	2.32	4,883	4,367
Other	ton	1,900	1,850	2.50	2.30	4,750	4,255
Alfalfa	ton	35	35	3.80	3.20	133	112
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1.95	1.90
Sorghum for grain	bu.	17	20	90	92	1,530	1,840
Sorghum for silage	ton	2	1	16	15	32	15
Soybeans	bu.	1,180	1,100	41.0	38.0	48,380	41,800
Tobacco, All	lb.	30.26	22.95	2,161	2,251	65,381	51,670
Dark fire-cured	lb.	5.72	5.50	3,115	3,000	17,816	16,500
Burley	lb.	24.0	17.0	1,920	2,000	46,080	34,000
Dark air-cured	lb.	.54	.45	2,750	2,600	1,485	1,170
Winter Wheat	bu.	280	150	49.0	56.0	13,720	8,400
UNITED STATES							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	10,419,900	9,379,100
Corn for grain	bu.	73,631	75,107	160.4	147.9	11,807,086	11,112,072
Corn for silage	ton	6,101	5,920	17.6	18.0	107,293	106,311
Cotton ¹	lb.	13,057.0	13,702.6	855	831	23,250.7	23,719.0
Cottonseed	ton	---	---	---	---	8,242.1	8,501.0
Hay, All	ton	61,966	61,649	2.55	2.44	158,247	150,590
Other	ton	40,259	39,260	2.06	1.91	82,766	74,819
Alfalfa	ton	21,707	22,389	3.48	3.38	75,481	75,771
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1,307.1	1,233.9
Sorghum for grain	bu.	6,517	5,736	69.6	68.7	453,654	393,893
Sorghum for silage	ton	352	311	13.6	13.6	4,776	4,218
Soybeans	bu.	73,958	71,361	42.2	43.3	3,123,686	3,086,432
Tobacco, All	lb.	408.05	298.02	2,161	2,147	881,973	639,709
Dark fire-cured	lb.	11.73	11.84	3,167	3,174	37,151	37,580
Burley	lb.	153.15	100.10	1,908	1,952	292,172	195,362
Dark air-cured	lb.	4.26	4.15	2,799	2,778	11,922	11,530
Winter Wheat	bu.	34,462	33,794	43.5	44.4	1,499,434	1,499,129

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.